

Testimony in Front of the House Transportation Committee - May 1, 2013
HB 4629

Mr. Chair, Members of the Committee, I am Bill Jackson representing the Outdoor Advertising Association of Michigan and am joined today by Mark Sherwood, of Lamar Advertising and the Vice-President of the OAAM.

As a brief background, the Outdoor Advertising Association of Michigan was founded in 1875, and is our states oldest industry trade group. Our members combined with our industry partners; Adams Outdoor Advertising, Cross Roads Media and Michigan Outdoor operate approximately 90% of Michigan's billboards.

Combined OAAM and our partners employ over 300 individuals and by way of annual rent payments put nearly \$ 20 million into the hands of thousands of landowners across the state - Real dollars that can be used for investment in Michigan's economy.

The Outdoor Advertising industry has a proud history of working with the Legislature and the Department on regulatory matters. We understand that billboards are a regulated industry and it is our goal at all times to be the most reasonable party at the table, advocating for laws that are fair and reasonable and provide our industry with predictability and reliability – In other words, as an industry we know that in order for us to operate we will need to jump through hoops, we simply ask that the we can see the hoops, that they aren't placed above our head, that they don't move when we go to jump through them and that they are in the same place over time.

HB 4629 accomplishes these stated goals, and we would like to applaud the efforts of Representative Bradford Jacobsen and Senator Tom Casperson who have worked diligently over the past year to save Michigan taxpayers nearly \$ 100 million in road funding while balancing the interests of our industry to be fairly regulated with predictable and reliable laws. Thank you, Representative Jacobsen.

As you have heard today, HB 4629 resolves those issues identified by the FHWA in a 2012 report protecting \$ 100 million dollars in road funding while holding harmless the Michigan Outdoor Advertising Industry.

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Specifically HB 4629:

- Protects \$ 100 million in Federal transportation dollars
- Looks out for the rights of landowners
- Protects millions of dollars of investment made by Outdoor Companies
- Streamlines the permitting process of vegetation management
- Insures that Michigan is once again on the forefront of digital billboard regulation – respecting the free market in process

The OAAM on behalf of our partners, Adams Outdoor Advertising, Cross Roads Media and Michigan Outdoor, we wish to reiterate industry support of HB 4629 and encourage this committee to report this bill to full body of the House.

In closing, the OAAM HB 4629 is an excellent example of legislation balancing the interests of the people of the state of Michigan with those of an important industry through fair and reasonable regulation that provides predictability and reliability in law.